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INSIDE



Neo-Remington

The former Remington Club that simply used to be a sports bar has transformed itself to become the Neo Remington Restaurant and Bar—an elegant restaurant, a cozy bar and a relaxing café, all rolled into one.

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'Small' Accident

The killing of a cabinet minister in violent clashes between rival militias in the far west of the country were the result of a "small accident," President Hamid Karzai said Wednesday.

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High-Tech Phones

The megapixel camera phones are coming, probably just in time for the arrival of speedier cellular technologies that can transmit higher-quality digital photos and even video.

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Governor shoulders La Fiesta costs

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The Executive Office has decided to shoulder the La Fiesta mall's operational costs amid plans of the Northern Marianas College to abandon the facility due to a worsening financial situation.

In an interview yesterday, NMC Board of Regents chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said that Gov. Juan N. Babauta, during a recent discussion, agreed to assume financial responsibility over La Fiesta after they explained to him the NMC's

USDA: There's no commitment to NMC

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development-Guam has not made any financial commitment to the Northern Marianas College for its Pacific Gateway project, according to a

budget situation.

"The Governor's Office will finance the operational costs, the monthly ex-

ranking agency official.

USDA-RD Western Pacific manager Joseph M. Diego said in a Feb. 24 letter to former NMC program director Jack Angello that, although NMC officials have con-



tacted them, his office has not made any commitment to the college.

"College officials have been in contact with our office... but we have not approved nor have committed to approve

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penses. It's definitely a great help to NMC because the college has really no money [right now]," she said.

King-Hinds, who assumed her post in September 2003, or a month after the La

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NEW APIL PRESIDENT

Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan administers the oath of office to new APIL President, Vice Speaker Timothy P. Villagomez. Also in photo are APIL Vice President Joann Brown, senator of Guam, and APIL Secretariat Walden Weilbacher.

MARIAN A. MARAYA

Fund seeing \$1.2M shortfall in govt payments per month

By RAFFY H. ARROYO
BUSINESS EDITOR

The NMI Retirement Fund stands to realize a funding shortfall of \$15.6 million for each year the government does not turn over the required employer contribution payments to the Fund.

According to Fund Administrator Karl T. Reyes, the \$800,000 the government



Reyes

pays in contributions every pay period hardly suffices in meeting the needed Fund collections.

He said the actual amount that the Fund is supposed to collect each pay

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Where is DOT OK for China Southern Air direct flights?

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority is still awaiting the U.S. Department of Transportation's approval of China Southern Air's application for direct air services to Tinian, which is scheduled to begin on April 23, 2004.

CPA executive director Carlos H. Salas disclosed yesterday that China Southern Airlines and the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino have yet to provide the CPA with the license that would allow the airline to bring passengers to the West Tinian International Airport.

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Local

Travel agency reinstates business with MRO

The Department of Public Health assured yesterday that no patient under the Medical Referral Program was denied off-island healthcare services due to a recent decision by travel agencies to suspend the issuance of flight bookings.

As this developed, the DPH's Public Information Office announced that Pacific Sky Travel Services has reinstated the issuance of airline tickets to the DPH Medical Referral Office, effective Tuesday, March 23.



DIABETES
+GREEN

In a media statement, the PIO quoted MRO Administrator Vicente C. Borja as saying that “no patient was denied off-island care due to this situation.”

DPH added that MRO continues to process and expedite the referral of patients for off-island care.

The statement from the Health Department came following reports that travel agencies have stopped issuing flight bookings to Medical Referral patients due to the government’s inability to pay for its outstanding Government Travel Requests.

Borja, in a memo to Public Health Secretary James U. Hofschneider, noted that the government collectively owed Pacific Sky Travel and MITA Travel some \$73,735.18.

The MRO official earlier expressed fear that failure to resolve the matter could place patient safety and care at risk.

The Babauta administration earlier assured that the problem was being addressed, saying it is just a matter of shifting priorities.

Meantime, CNMI travel agencies have recommended that the government make use of a Corporate American Express card, which would be issued to and controlled by the Travel Office in order to resolve the problem of airline tickets not being issued for GTRs.

The travel agencies explained that this would alleviate the financial risk currently placed on small business owners providing service to the government.

The group said that American Express would also provide the cardholder—in this case the Travel Office—with quarterly reports that will easily dovetail into the Department of Finance’s control.

The recommendation was forwarded to the Finance Department this week.

The CNMI Travel, Getaway Travel, Hafa Adai International Travel Agency, Century Travel, Marianas International Travel Agency, Interkam International Travel Agency, Pacific International Travel Service, Pacific Sky International, Tasi Tour and Travel, Travel Bags II, and World Tour and Travel signed the letter that was sent to the DoF.

“We sincerely believe that this problem can be solved with the combined efforts of all involved parties. We respectfully request that immediate steps be taken to avoid the disruption of crucial services provided by the travel agencies to the CNMI government,” the letter stated.

The group also stressed that many agencies have outstanding issues going as far back as five years for GTRs that were issued but never received by the travel agents, and funds and budgets have since lapsed. (*Marian A. Maraya*)

NMC board stops bus service to La Fiesta

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College Board of Directors has decided to terminate its bus service to La Fiesta effective April 1.

Board chairperson Kimberlyn King-Hinds said in an interview yesterday that this would save the college \$3,000 a month.

“It’s something that we have to do considering our budget situation... The board has instructed the college administration to go to the tenants and inform them about it,” she said.

She noted that since the college took over the facility operations in January this year, it has also provided daily bus service from NMC campus in As Terlaje to La Fiesta in San Roque.

She said such arrangement was not actually part of NMC’s sub-lease purchase agreement, but it went ahead with the service since it was being done by the previous owner.

“It’s one of those services provided by the prior owner,” she said.

The daily bus service caters to island tourists.

The NMC leadership continues to review its Pacific gateway project, particularly its use of La Fiesta complex following findings of huge losses incurred in maintenance of the facility.

Contrary to the leadership’s expectations, La Fiesta’s acquisition has proven to be a big burden on the college, the board has acknowledged.

“When we signed it (purchase), we were made to understand that as a worst case scenario, we’d break even. But that’s not the case now,” King-Hinds said earlier.

She said the college was expecting that it would operate La Fiesta at no additional cost given the projected revenues from existing tenants.

NMC has discovered that some tenants are now paying at a lower rate.

The college entered into a \$7.5 million purchase of the property on Aug. 18, 2003.

So far, it has incurred some \$150,000 in debts mainly for fuel cost of La Fiesta’s power generation plant.

Despite these costs, the college cannot use the facility yet as it requires major renovation to suit classroom standards.

NMC has planned to incur another set of debt, amounting to \$10 million, for the renovation and purchase of equipment.

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BABY NEWS

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Olympic race against time

After seven years of planning, feuding and working, with barely 159 dawns left before the summer Olympics opens in Athens, 24 of the 39 new athletic venues for the world's oldest games are not yet complete. Oops. According to The Times' Alan Abrahamson, this embarrassing backlog also includes the Olympic stadium where August's opening ceremonies are tied thematically to the vast roof, which does not exist yet.

The Olympics are a fascinating social, political and economic phenomenon that happens to involve athletics. Suggested by the Oracle of Delphi 2,780 years ago as a PR gimmick to interrupt the cycle of wars among Greek city-states with a regular cycle of athletic combat, the Games have ever since been much more than games. They've become global entertainment, construction challenges, economic engines, tourism opportunities, propaganda platforms.

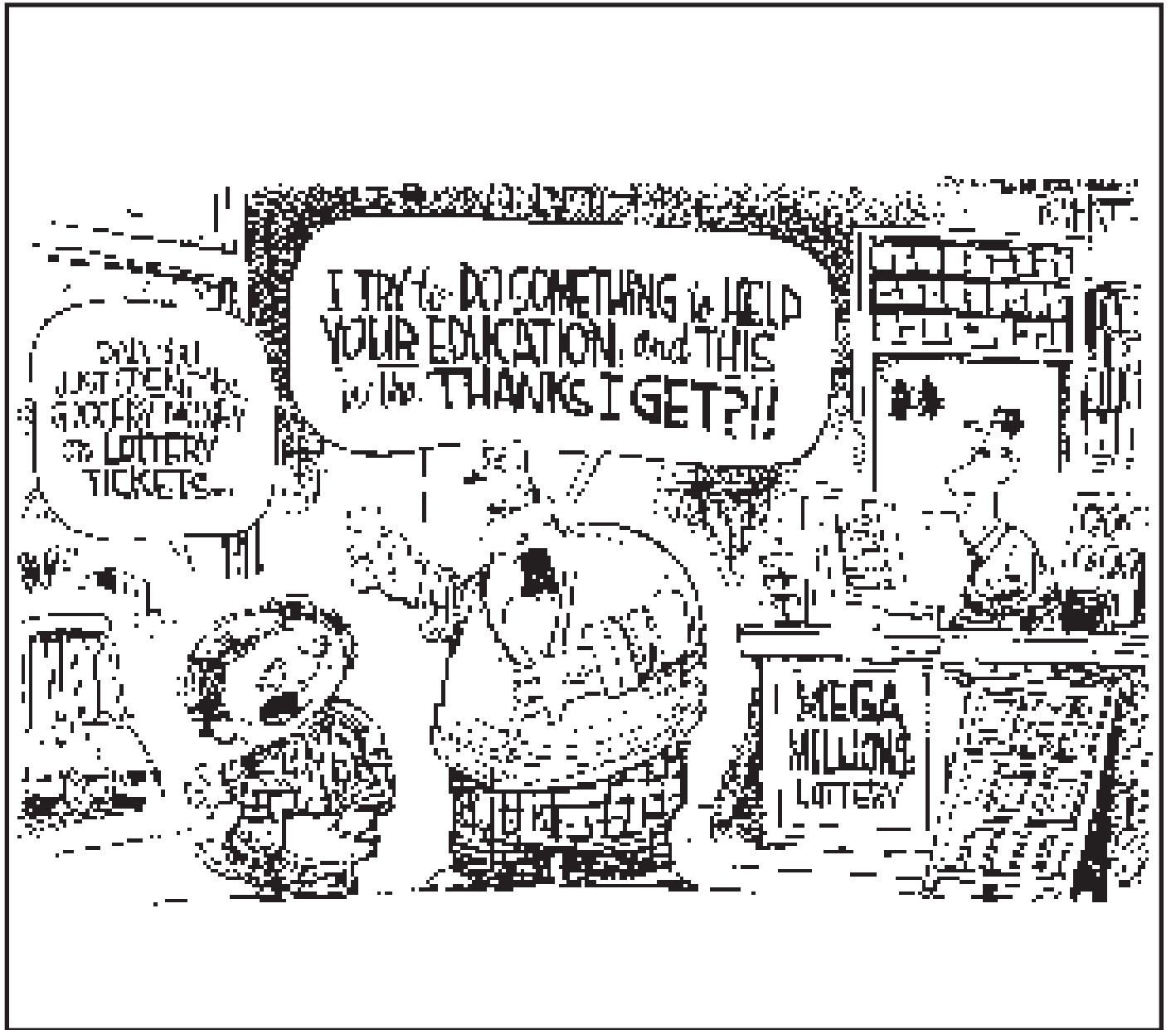
Besides assembling the world's greatest amateur athletes under an idealistic anthem of fellowship, they focus the world's attention on positive achievements for at least 17 days, especially if they increase a certain nation's medal count. The Games have become billion-dollar bonanzas for broadcast empires and enriching opportunities for victorious competitors. Even when confronting judging scandals and banned performance-enhancing stealth drugs, the Games reflect the priorities, dreams, rivalries, conniving, fears and foibles of their times.

This time, the Games also seem to reflect the procrastination and enduring fractiousness of their founding society, a new member of the European Union. Winning, then constructing and executing an Olympics, is, well, an Olympian task that consumes most of a decade. Greece, which opened the Games' modern era in 1896, was granted the 2004 Games in 1997. The home committee then foundered, reorganized and restarted and has been behind ever since.

A new airport is done, but flying is not yet an Olympic sport. According to Abrahamson's recent report, 12 of the 24 incomplete Olympic structures are less than 90 percent done. New subways have tracks but no operations. Greek officials have yet to even settle on new regulations governing prostitution, which is legal. Another reflection of the times—security—will cost \$2 million every hour.

Greek and Olympic officials, perhaps with no choice, profess confidence that My Big Fat Greek Olympics will be ready on time. It'll be a close finish, always good for ratings. Oh, one other little wrinkle: Greece holds national elections this weekend. Opposition conservatives could win, meaning an unpredictable political housecleaning starts Monday morning—with only 157 dawns left.

(c) 2004, Los Angeles Times



Senate needs shot at redemption after hiring fiasco

After the guilty have been punished and the smoke of public opinion has subsided, many of us have thought that the series of incidents that led to the ghost jobs scandal at the Senate should now be buried and forgotten.

We may have drawn that conclusion too soon.

The reported plan by the Adriano leadership to hire additional full time employees to handle site preparations for Rota and Tinian sessions is much too hard to bear.

This plan makes it apparent that our esteemed legislators have not learned their lesson yet as they seem to think that the people of the CNMI are so feeble-minded as to not sense their disregard for proprietary spending of taxpayer money.

There are other more feasible alternatives to hiring FTEs to set up sessions on the two outer islands. And it should dawn upon our good senators that their constituents expect frugality and conscientious spending habits of them.

If the need is to have staff that would take care of the required logistics, venue preparation, printing and other needs during legislative sessions, it would make more sense to just have existing LB staff on Saipan shuttle to the two islands once a month for those sessions. Even if the sessions last for days each time, it would not cost the government as much as it would with the additional FTEs. Our senators should be reminded that after the ghost employees fiasco, they should all the more be cautious with their hiring practices, especially the kind that may be perceived as political and familial in appearance.

□ □ □ □ □

I must say that my heart bleeds for the many men and women who were gypped of their hard earned money via the alleged fraudulent schemes of officials of Saipan University.

This is not a simple case of fraud and misrepresentation. What the SU officials did to those hapless, unsuspecting victims is robbery of the grandest scale and should be severely dealt with. That the students had to literally scrape the bottom of the bin to come up with the money to pay their way to Saipan and into a supposed bright future makes it all the more disheartening.

Fraudulent, get-rich-quick scams like this—especially if the victims are underprivileged people, whose weakness makes them more

By RAFFY H. ARROYO

The views expressed are strictly that of the author. Arroyo is the business editor of the Saipan Tribune.



susceptible to scam artists—should be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

Considering that most of these people lost their lifetime savings, it should be up to the authorities, both local and federal, to see to it that the perpetrators of this economic crime are punished to the fullest extent of the law.

Without necessarily passing judgment on SU founder Soon Kyung Park's guilt, I think a long jail time would not be sufficient. It is imperative that most if not all of the money be returned with appropriate punitive damages.

How this is to be done is a good question. As much as the local government would want to help these victims, it could not cough out cash to somehow ease their pain. It also remains doubtful if money is readily available from Mr. Park and his cohorts to repay the students.

What the government could do at the very least is to make sure these poor people are given the chance to rebuild their lives. The problem, however, is that some of these people reportedly prefer to just go back to their home country instead of taking on jobs here. This makes the need for a payout all the more urgent and critical.

In my opinion, the Administration has done well by providing the victims the support and means to pursue their case, although as far as the victims are concerned, more has to be done in terms of reparation. It would do better if the Administration gives more focus on this issue if only to make sure it gets addressed as a priority.

This controversy has the potential of further ruining the already much-maligned image of Saipan as a member of the American political family. It is important that this controversy be put to a close fast, equitably and fairly for all concerned.

Martha's case of extreme hubris

She thought she could do what she wanted—in this case, use inside information illegally to spare herself a financial loss—and that she could get away with it. But it ultimately led to her public disgrace.

During her trial and the long buildup to it, I often wondered why Stewart didn't just 'fess up:

"Yes, I got some information that made me think my stocks were going to tank. So I sold them. As a former stockbroker, I knew this was wrong, but for the moment greed got the best of me. And I regret it."

She might have been able to cut a deal with the federal investigators, plead to a misdemeanor, pay a fine, spend a few months in jail and then go back to icing elaborate wedding cakes. It would have been embarrassing, and probably would have hurt her business somewhat. But it would have been nothing like sitting in federal court last week and hearing that she'd been convicted of four felonies.

But Stewart and her stockbroker, Peter Bacanovic, apparently thought they could get away with their little crime. As her lawyer Robert Morvillo pointed out during the trial, Stewart couldn't have been motivated by money alone to do something that a jury has now said was illegal. The \$45,600 she saved by dumping her ImClone stock was a pittance compared to her total fortune of more than \$1 billion.

But Stewart had built an empire by doing things just so, and was

accustomed to having things her way. She must have thought she could have it in this instance too.

There was also evidence of greed. The wealthy, we have learned from other divas such as Leona Helmsley, are often quite penurious, seeking to claim every dime, to gain every advantage. Perhaps that's what gets them to their station in life. Stewart, we learned during the trial, billed her media company for tens of thousands of dollars for a personal vacation, when she could easily have paid for it herself.

She was also used to enjoying advantages that ordinary folks don't have. Confiding to a pal that she'd received some confidential information about her ImClone stock, she allegedly said, "Isn't it nice to have brokers who tell you those things?"—or words to that effect.

Stewart and Bacanovic—who claimed that he never told her about the imploding stock, and said they had an agreement to sell if it hit a certain low—seemed to be caught up in a private dance. This was their story and they thought if they stuck to it that all would be well.

They were undone by a 28-year-old assistant broker, Douglas Faneuil, who refused to be their fall guy and who never wavered on the stand while telling his version of what really happened.

Stewart is certain to appeal the jury verdict. But analysts are already assessing the potential fallout from her convictions. She is now a convicted felon—and, if the convictions are upheld, she's likely to do jail time. Her reputation has been battered; her company



By **SHERYL MCCARTHY**

Newsday

McCarthy is a Newsday columnist.

could be devastated. She might never again be allowed to play a major role in a publicly traded company.

And all because of hubris.

Some people are going to feel sorry for Stewart. But I'm not one of them. I don't think this was a frivolous prosecution or a witch-hunt of a powerful and successful woman. I see it in the light of the numerous corporate scandals that have unfolded in recent years, where CEOs, CFOs, accountants, mutual fund managers, stockbrokers, brokerage firms and banks have used all kinds of skulduggery to play fast and loose with other people's money.

It's important for the rich and well-connected to understand that they're not entitled to an endless array of perks, almost always at someone else's expense.

Character assassination sullies History Channel

By **DAVID SHAW**

Los Angeles Times

Early in my career, I had a city editor—an otherwise reasonable man, a talented journalist and a good friend—who nonetheless spun the most astonishingly farfetched conspiracy theories about the assassination of President Kennedy. In one of his more fevered imaginings—spun over his desk at work and over bourbon and poker in his home—my friend told a conspiracy tale in which a police officer in Long Beach, Calif., was murdered, in the police station, to cover up his role in the assassination and its coverup.

But not even my friend went as far as a History Channel documentary broadcast in November that argued—no, insisted—that Lyndon Johnson “murdered John Kennedy to become president and to avoid prison,” as one Texas lawyer said in the opening moments of “The Guilty Men,” one program in a 12-hour series called “The Men Who Killed Kennedy.”

The series, which covered various Kennedy assassination theories and was part of the History Channel's coverage of the 40th anniversary of the event, attracted virtually no media attention at the time, although outraged relatives and former colleagues of President Johnson did protest and demanded an opportunity to rebut the charge—and got nowhere.

When that protest intensified last month, the History Channel agreed to appoint a panel of three historians to “discuss the controversial theory and to review the program.” When their examination is complete, the History Channel has promised to broadcast another program featuring their conclusions about “America's fascination with the Kennedy assassination, (including) the credibility of this particular theory and the way it was presented.”

Credibility? Incredibility would be more like it.

I could understand such a theory being published in the National Enquirer or on some whacko Weblog or in a novel by Robert Ludlum or Richard Condon. But the History Channel is supposed to present, well, history, not preposterous and irresponsible speculation by folks repeating the hearsay rantings of folks now dead. (One of the key figures in the show is Barr McClellan, who repeats charges he made in a 2003 book “Blood, Money & Power: How L.B.J. Killed J.F.K.”—a book The New York Times characterized as containing “several passages of admittedly fictional projection.”)

How did the History Channel decide to descend into this ugly morass?

“The Men Who Killed Kennedy” aired in somewhat different forms in England in 1988 and again in 1995, and producer Nigel Turner was criticized both times for some of his assassination theories.

Executives at the History Channel say their program was “original” and was subject to “a review” beforehand. But they won't say who conducted that review and they won't answer specific questions on the program, pending the outcome of the examination by their panel of historians (Robert Dallek, author of biographies of Johnson and Kennedy; Stanley Kutler, professor of American Institutions at the University of Wisconsin and author of two books on Watergate; and Thomas Sugrue, history professor at the University of Pennsylvania).

They do, however, say they are “reviewing our review procedures,” and in a prepared statement announcing the appointment of the historians, Dan Davids, executive vice president and general manager of the channel, said, “Nothing is more important to the History Channel than the integrity of our programming.”

He also said he and his fellow executives “take (critics’) ... concerns about historical accuracy and fairness very seriously and are taking appropriate action.”

The “appropriate action” would have been to avoid showing “The Guilty Men” in the first place—or, failing that, to have retracted it and apologized for it immediately.

I'm all for a robust debate and responsible investigation of the Kennedy assassination—or any other momentous event in U.S. history. But this program was neither debate nor responsible. It was a farce.

It's true that nine times in the course of the one-hour, independently produced program, the History Channel's resident historian, Steve Gillon, reminded viewers that it offered “just one of the many theories about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.” But that's as close as the station came to a disclaimer.

I've long, albeit reluctantly, accepted the Warren Commission conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy. It's not that I find the commission's arguments so persuasive. But while I remain open to—indeed eager for—a better explanation, every alternative I've heard so far seems even less persuasive.

One need not accept the Warren Commission findings, though, to be horrified by the History Channel broadcast of “The Guilty Men.” One need not even have been an admirer of Johnson.

Johnson could be—and often was—ruthless in pursuit of his objectives. It would not be difficult to make the case that the concept of corruption was not entirely foreign to Johnson's experience. But murder? Johnson as a presidential assassin—not the trigger man but the man who ordered and organized the killing?

Wait, there's more. “The Guilty Men” said Johnson ordered seven other murders—including that of his own sister. Johnson as a serial killer?

“Deep in the heart of Texas lie buried some of the darkest and most well-kept secrets that tell us who killed John F. Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963—and why,” says an ominous voice-over near the beginning of “The Guilty Men.” Then: “Those forces of darkness revolved around one of the state's most famous political sons—Lyndon Baines Johnson.”

The show went on to “document” what it called Johnson's “murderous cycle” and posited the theory that he had help in the Kennedy assassination from the CIA (allegedly fearful that Kennedy would abolish it), the FBI (whose boss feared that Kennedy would fire him), the military-industrial complex (supposedly worried that Kennedy planned to withdraw American forces from Vietnam), and various Texas oil billionaires (alarmed that Kennedy would end or reduce the oil depletion allowance that had helped make them billionaires).

The show also said Johnson feared imprisonment because of his association with Bobby Baker, a Johnson protege and Senate aide who was forced to resign after accusations of illegal activities and was later imprisoned after being found guilty of theft, fraud and income tax evasion.

Various elements of this far-reaching conspiracy theory have been advanced before, of course—mostly by the kooks who frequent the fringes of society and also by Oliver Stone in his 1991 film, “JFK.”

But not even Stone went as far as “The Guilty Men” in fingering Johnson, and Stone was making a movie—reprehensible as it was—not a program for the heretofore respected History Channel.

I hope their expert historians move quickly in their review, and when they return—as they inevitably will—with a report that there isn't a shred of evidence linking LBJ to the JFK assassination, I hope the History Channel—and its parent companies, Hearst, Disney's ABC Cable and General Electric's NBC—will have the good sense to make a public and abject apology.

If not, I've got this script I'm working on and I figure they'll be interested in it. It reveals the dark secret about how Harry Truman conspired with Mr. Blackwell and Elvis Presley's tailor “Nudie” to poison President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and make the cause of his death look like a cerebral hemorrhage—all because they thought a wheelchair-bound president did not inspire American men to buy fine clothing.

Shaw is a reporter for The Times.

Letters to the Editor

Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions. All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name, address and, if possible, fax or telephone number. Letters are edited for space, clarity and fairness.

An open letter to governor, BOE

I have mentioned on more than one occasion the need for the Governor's Office to work with and through the BOE Teacher Rep. in implementing the governor's Initiative within PSS. The BOE Teacher Rep. is the governor's appointee and the proper conduit for the governor to intervene on teachers' behalf. It is my belief that neither office, the governor nor BOE should be attempting to implement a plan for teachers without the input and services of the BOE Teacher Rep.

The BOE Teacher Rep. is the governor's appointee not just to represent teachers but to also assist the governor as a BOE member with his plans for improving the Department of Education. In the absence of a Secretary of Education, the BOE Teacher Rep. is the governor's only legitimate conduit for the governor to affect BOE policy. For the governor and BOE to continue debating issues about teachers without the BOE Teacher Rep. being involved would be contemptuous to teaches now that teachers have a BOE Teacher Rep.

The governor clearly has good intentions and the concerns by BOE are legitimate considering BOE is on the outside looking in—even though BOE chose to be in that position. The BOE Teacher Rep. and the Teacher Rep. panel that I have established is the means for a resolution to the differences between the Governor's Office and BOE. I would like to suggest that true respect be given to teachers by implementing the Governor's Initiatives through the BOE Teacher Rep.

I'm sure that I can be of help in this matter and I look forward to some form of notification to discuss this matter with BOE and the Governor's Office to reach a resolution, in the best interest of all the stakeholders in our education system.

Ambrose M. Bennett

BOE Teacher Rep.

Mallard not extinct

The article on the extinct Mariana Mallard is inconsistent. I recently moved to the United States but prior to moving I lived in Kagman 1. Every year during the rainy season, I would see a group of Mariana Mallards in a little wet land area. They may be in the preservation area, which is fenced in. To be positive in making this claim of not seeing this species of bird since the late 70's is not true. The bird still exists. This is my opinion. My last sighting was in mid to late 2001. Thank you

Adrian San Nicolas

Sioux City, Iowa

Saipan Tribune

CNNI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Disabilities council to honor 10 advocates

In celebration of March as National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities will honor 10 advocates of the year today at the Aqua Resort Club beginning at 11am.

According to council executive director Thomas J. Camacho, the Annual Advocate of the Year ceremony is an annual event that the council started several years ago to coincide with the annual developmental

disabilities awareness month.

“It is a time set aside to recognize those individuals, private and public entities and other members in the community for their advocacy work this past year,” he explained.

The awardees will be awarded in the following categories:

- **Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee must be a person without a disability who facilitated and resulted to policy changes, removal of

physical barriers, assisted a person(s) with developmental disability(ies) receive supports and services or advocacy assistance through attorney, file complaints or NMPASI;

- **Transportation Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee must be an entity that provided or expanded its transportation services not otherwise available in the community);
- **Employer Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for

this nomination, the nominee must be an employer that directly hired (not training agreement with OVR but as a result of OVR or WIA efforts) and provided reasonable accommodations including training to an employee with developmental disabilities, that lasted at least one year);

- **Family Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee must have a child(ren) with a developmental disability, most

Fitia vows to assist NMI disability council

After attending a CNMI Developmental Disabilities Council educational presentation last Tuesday, House Speaker Benigno R. Fitia expressed his strong willingness to support the council’s efforts through local legislation.

In a letter to DDC executive director Thomas J. Camacho, Fitia said: “I will be conferring with the House legal counsels who attended the seminar to decide on the course of action the House will take concerning those important issues you and the other guest speakers pointed out, which require legislative consideration.”



Fitia

In an annual educational presentation at the Aqua Resort last Tuesday, Camacho discussed the mission and mandate of the Disabilities Council, as well as the issues confronting the council from a local and national standpoint.

One issue that Camacho raised is the need for the establishment of a local govern-

ment respite program to care for disabled clients. Such a proposal is currently supported by House Bill 14-9, which is sponsored by Rep. Benjamin Seman.

Another proposal put forth by Camacho is legislation that would grant tax breaks to businesses or individuals rendering services to disabled individuals, along with the updating of the CNMI Building Code to conform with the U.S. Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act certification.

“I want to congratulate you and thank you for the excellent seminar you and your group conducted yesterday,” said the speaker to Camacho, adding that he was thoroughly impressed with the quality of presentation and exhibit of materials at the seminar.

Also present at the DDC seminar were representatives Clyde Norita, Ray Yumul, and Janet Maratita.

especially very young child(ren) with developmental disabilities who advocated on behalf of their child to get supports or services or exercise their civil rights in education, early childhood, independent living, health care, recreation, transportation, etc.;

- **Public Entity Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee must be a government entity that made their program(s) and services accessible, advocated for equal access, provided special accommodations, changed their policies and practices, included provisions on ADA requirements for public benefits, that impacts citizens with developmental disabilities and their families.);
- **Legislative Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee must have introduced bills or resolutions, and assisted with the passage of law that benefits and impacts a person’s life and their families’;
- **Private Business Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee must be a private entity that made their programs, services accessible, advocated for equal access, provided special accommodations, changed their policies and practices, included provisions on ADA requirements for public benefits, impacts citizens with developmental disabilities and their families, etc.;
- **Self Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee must be person with developmental disabilities who advocated for him/herself to become productive, independent, included, and as a result of their

advocacy efforts, became employed, effected policy changes, buildings accessibility, exercised his/her civil rights, supports or programs or services redesigned or more accessible, or made available;

- **Community Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee may be any community member at-large, who advocates for people (or a person) with developmental disabilities to get supports or services or exercise their civil rights in education, employment, independent living, health care, recreation, transportation, or who’s actions benefit the lives of people with developmental disabilities;
- **Educator Advocate of the Year.** To meet the criteria for this nomination, the nominee must be an education entity or personnel who advocated on behalf of a group of students to get appropriate and quality education, school became accessible, education policy creation or change, secure funding to support education, etc.

The event today will be keynoted by council chairman Mariano K. Camacho, while the opening remarks will be given by the Council executive director.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta, Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente, Senate President Joaquin G. Adriano, House Speaker Benigno R. Fitia, Presiding Judges of the Superior and Supreme Courts, including District Court Judge Alex Munson, Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela and Northern Islands Mayor Valentin Taisakan have been invited.

GARDENIA ISLANDERS
+RED

shell





Business

Neo Remington takes on new image

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

There's a new hangout at the tourist district in Garapan.

The former Remington Club that simply used to be a sports bar has transformed itself to become the Neo Remington Restaurant and Bar—an elegant restaurant, a cozy bar and a relaxing café, all rolled into one.

The Neo Remington just has undergone a major facelift. The old Remington Club temporarily closed down for a few months for major renovation and reopened as Neo Remington last March 1. Mabu Corp., headed by its president Kentaro Suzuki, is the company behind the design and renovation of Remington.

Anyone who has enjoyed the Neo Remington experience knows the impression derived before entering the establishment is there to last. An artificial waterfall, complemented by modern light effects, welcomes guests just before they enter the restaurant.

The neat-looking restaurant itself provides a cozy ambiance, with its big space, exquisite Jap-

anese furniture and the soothing sight of an aquarium. Neo Remington also has a private room equipped with its own sound system, comfortable sofas and even a washroom.

Remington retained the bar at the restaurant, where veteran bartender Chito Cristobal displays his expertise in mixing drinks of at least 200 varieties.

The gameroom is segregated for those who want to enjoy billiards and darts. A café will soon start serving guests with lunch and afternoon snacks, besides coffee and tea.

Marianas Sunrise Enterprises, headed by its president Takahashi Toshihiro, owns the establishment. The company contracted Phase 3 International Inc. to manage Neo Remington's operations.

Akane Imaaya, Neo Remington's manager, said Neo Remington would begin full operations for the restaurant today. "We have a lot of international food like Italian, French and American, which are prepared by Japanese chef Nobuhiro Muarayama."

Serving food from 6pm to 11:30pm, the restaurant offers a

long list of menu where a guest can select his choice of food: pasta like Peperoncino Japanese style; "super-thin" pizza such as the Tiny Dried Fish and Chinese Basil Pizza; meat like the Lamb Sautéed in Spicy Sauce; or seafood such as fish and lobster.

Initially, the restaurant has prepared 72 choices in its menu.

"Our food is good for wine," Akane said. "I really want to welcome everybody, not only tourists."

Customers could enjoy the privacy of Neo Remington's private room at a cost of only \$30 per hour. Excellent for parties, the private room may be offered at a discounted rate depending on the guests' orders, according to Akane.

Ironically, the elegant presentation of food and drinks at Neo Remington comes at reasonable prices. In fact, Akane said domestic beers only cost \$2 per can or bottle during Neo Remington's "happy hour" from 5pm to 7pm. During this time, the bar offers all cocktail drinks at 50-percent off regular prices. The bar opens from 5pm to 2am.

At the bar, Cristobal displays



Shane and friends party at the Neo Remington Restaurant and Bar, enjoying cocktail drinks prepared by veteran bartender Chito Cristobal, inset.



Neo Remington's private room where guests can have private get-togethers.



Neo Remington's cozy dining area.
PHOTOS BY JOHN RAVELO

his forte in mixing drinks. He has had at least 12 years of experience as bartender in Hawaii, California and Saipan.

"People like to stay in the bar because of the bartender's capability, his ability to communicate, and being friendly and well-groomed," Cristobal said.

The Too Tee Fruity—a special tropical drink with mixed

flavors of peach, lychee and pineapple and topped with whip cream—is just one of Cristobal's mixes.

Besides the Bud family and Miller beers, the bar also offers foreign brand beers such as Guinness of Australia, Corona and Modelo of Mexico, Heineken of Germany and Asahi of Japan. It also serves an array of

wines, including Australian and South American.

Neo Remington plans to launch the café soon. It will serve lunch and afternoon snacks overlooking the hotel street in Garapan.

Neo Remington is located across the Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach. It opens its doors to guests Tuesdays through Sundays.

Coke delays Dasani in France, Germany

ATLANTA (AP)—The Coca-Cola Co.'s effort to sell Europe on its Dasani bottled water is in limbo as the world's largest beverage maker has delayed the launch of the drink in France and Germany, in part because of publicity over quality concerns with its Great Britain version.

The Atlanta-based company's decision Wednesday comes less than a week after it withdrew the beverage from sale in Britain because it found samples contained higher than permitted levels of the chemical bromate.

Coke said "the timing is no longer considered optimal" to launch Dasani in France and Germany. Spokesman Kelly Brooks said the decision was also "due to the publicity issues of last week." At the same time, Coke said it believes the Great Britain incident is isolated and resolved.

"We're just doing what we think is right for our company and the brand at this time," Brooks said.

Coke also said Wednesday it has

decided not to reintroduce Dasani in Great Britain at this time.

Todd Stender, an analyst with Crowell, Weedon & Co. in Los Angeles, said the delayed launches could hurt Coke because Europe is a key international market for the company, especially in the non-carbonated beverage segment. He said he doesn't expect the problem to persist.

"Big picture, I think it's just a short-term issue," Stender said. "They'll do whatever it takes to make sure this is a viable product because Europe is too important of a market for them."

Coca-Cola, which launched Dasani in Britain last month, said the higher than permitted levels of bromate occurred as a result of a process aimed at adding calcium to its bottled water. Its U.S. version does not have calcium added. The U.S. and Great Britain versions are purified tap water. The France and Germany versions were to have come from spring water.

On Friday, a Coke spokesman said the voluntary withdrawal of Dasani from Great Britain was a precaution.

The Food Standards Agency said there was no immediate risk to public health, and described Coca-Cola's decision to stop selling Dasani in Britain as "sensible." It said bromate can cause an increased cancer risk as a result of long-term exposure.

Coke had planned to launch Dasani in France in mid-April and in Germany in late spring, early summer, Brooks said. The company had already begun a public relations campaign for the product in the two countries, though Brooks would not say how much money it has spent on the effort.

"This postponement has no material impact on our immediate growth perspectives for Europe. We are fully on track to deliver on our numbers and to deliver on numerous new innovation projects and product launches," Brooks said.

remington



cosmos
+blue/pink

verizon
cmyk

Microsoft hit with record \$613M fine

By PAUL GEITNER
AP BUSINESS WRITER

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP)—The European Union slapped Microsoft Corp. with a \$613 million fine Wednesday for abusively wielding its Windows software monopoly and ordered sanctions that go well beyond the U.S. antitrust settlement - setting up what could be another lengthy court battle.

Microsoft called the EU's de-

cision "unwarranted and ill-considered," and said it expected to ask a judge to suspend the order pending appeal.

The EU antitrust office said it sought to alter Microsoft's behavior because its five-year investigation found that the software giant tried to squeeze competitors out of Windows-related markets and "the illegal behavior is still ongoing."

It gave the company 90 days to offer European computer

manufacturers a version of Windows stripped of the company's digital media player, software for viewing video and listening to music that is expected to become pivotal in the industry as multimedia content becomes more pervasive.

The EU also gave Microsoft 120 days to release "complete and accurate" information to rivals in the office server market so their products can work more smoothly with desktop comput-

ers running Windows.

"Microsoft has abused its virtual monopoly power over the PC desktop in Europe," EU antitrust chief Mario Monti said. "We are simply ensuring that anyone who develops new software has a fair opportunity to compete in the marketplace."

Monti said he limited the order to Europe in deference to regulators in the United States and other countries, but that doing so "will not unduly undermine the

effectiveness," given the size of the European market. Microsoft, which had \$32 billion in revenue last year, does about 20 percent of its business in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Microsoft's general counsel, Brad Smith, said he would most likely ask the presiding judge at the European Court of First Instance to stay the order pending appeal - a process that can take years.

"The European Commis-

sion has the first word, but the European courts have the final word," he said.

Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, announcing a new speech server product in San Francisco on Wednesday, did not mention the EU case.

The fine would automatically be suspended upon appeal, but antitrust experts were divided on the company's chances for winning emergency relief from the rest of the order.

Comcast CEO comments on Disney bid

BOSTON (AP)—Comcast Corp. chief executive Brian Roberts said Wednesday that "some facts would have to change" before his company would consider raising its offer for Walt Disney Co.

Speaking to fellow CEOs in his company's largest cable market, Roberts reiterated previous comments that the proposed Disney acquisition is not a "must have" for Comcast.

The company's bid for Disney was initially valued at \$54 billion, at least 10 percent higher than Disney stock at the time, but changing stock prices have since erased that premium. Disney has rebuffed the proposal.

Roberts told reporters after a



AP

Comcast Corp. Chief Executive Brian Roberts.

speech at The Boston College Chief Executives' Club that Comcast would wait to see "in the fullness of time where the market settles out."

Meanwhile, Roberts and other company officials said Philadelphia-based Comcast plans to make the Springfield and Hartford, Conn., region one of two test markets later this year for much-vaunted Voice Over IP technology, which could route calls over the Internet. The company expects a consumer rollout in 2005 across New England.

Roberts said during his speech that 95 percent of its plant would be ready to handle IP by the end of the year. Time Warner Cable has begun offering the service in a few markets.

Roberts also said that, with new technologies moving into place, Comcast was considering taking another look at selling services to small businesses.

Bush concerned about high gas prices

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Bush administration voiced concern Wednesday about gasoline prices reaching an all-time high, but ruled out tapping into the government's oil reserves to temporarily ease the problem.

"We need to make sure we have the resources in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to act in the event of an emergency, which would be a severe disruption of energy supplies," said White House spokesman Scott McClellan.

He said that there would be no halt in the program to keep pumping oil into the reserves, located in Texas and Louisiana, just because oil prices are currently so high.

The retail price of gasoline hit an all-time high Tuesday - nearly \$1.74 per gallon nationwide

- reflecting strong demand, tight supplies and the high cost of oil, the AAA reported.

AAA, formerly the American Automobile Association, reported that motorists are now paying \$1.738 per gallon for self-serve regular unleaded gasoline, one-tenth of a penny higher than the previous record set last Aug. 30. Premium unleaded costs more than \$2 a gallon in many parts of the country.

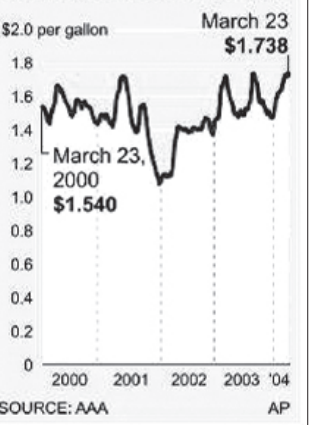
"Like most Americans, the president is concerned about rising gas prices," said McClellan.

McClellan renewed the administration's call for Congress to pass the administration-supported energy bill, designed to provide new tax breaks and other incentives to spur exploration and production.

Gas prices reach all-time high

The national average price of self-serve regular unleaded gasoline reached an all-time high on Tuesday, reflecting strong demand, tight supplies and the high cost of oil.

National daily average price of regular unleaded gasoline



urban outlet
+red



RECORD FINE European Commissioner for Competition Mario Monti addresses the media in Brussels, Wednesday. The European Union found Microsoft Corp. guilty Wednesday of abusing its “near monopoly” with Windows to squeeze competitors in other markets and levied a record fine of \$613 million. AP

Report: Some credit helpers hurt consumers

By **MARCY GORDON**
AP BUSINESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Raymond Schuck thought he was being responsible when he went to Cambridge Credit Counseling for help reducing \$90,000 in credit card and bank debt. Instead, the retired museum director said the monthly payments he made never reached his creditors - and he ended up filing for bankruptcy.

“My credit rating was completely ruined,” the Lima, Ohio, resident testified Wednesday at a Senate hearing looking into the credit counseling industry.

Credit counseling companies, which often advertise heavily, portray themselves as offering a refuge for consumers drowning in debt. But lawmakers, regulators and consumer groups charge that some counseling agencies trade on their nonprofit status to gouge customers, serving more as an anchor plunging people deeper into debt than as a life preserver.

Each year, an estimated 9 million Americans have some contact with a credit counseling agency - often the last stop before a bankruptcy filing.

A report prepared by the bipartisan staff of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee’s investigative panel found that consumer complaints are on the rise as new companies come into the credit counseling business and abuses proliferate. The investigators found a pattern of abuse among some counseling agencies, especially new entrants to the field.

“Clearly, something is wrong with the credit counseling industry,” said Sen. Norm Coleman, R-Minn., chairman of the investigative subcommittee.

“Our investigation has revealed common patterns of improper conduct” by new entrants.

Audits of 50 credit counseling agencies by the Internal Revenue Service “may very well” result in some of them being stripped of their nonprofit tax exemptions or even being referred for criminal investigation to the Justice Department, IRS Commissioner Mark Everson testified to the subcommittee.

And Thomas Leary, a member of the Federal Trade Commission, said: “We remain concerned about deceptive practices in the credit counseling industry.”

Former employees of Cambridge Credit and AmeriDebt Inc., who also testified, told of having to use fake names, “boiler room” sales operations and pressure on commission-paid counselors to get consumers to pay stiff upfront fees, with no counseling or debt education provided.

Officials of the two companies disputed the accounts of the former customers and employees. They said their companies act responsibly and provide a valuable service to consumers.

Chris Viale, chief operating officer of Cambridge Credit, called the accounts “unfair and distorted accusations.”

“There is a popular notion that performance incentives encourage counselors to act in their own best interests rather than in the interests of consumers. This is not true,” Viale said.

As senators grilled the officials about industry practices, the president of Debtworks Inc., Andris Pukke, asserted his Fifth Amendment privilege in refusing to testify.

The for-profit Debtworks, Pukke and his brother are among several parties named in a lawsuit filed by the state of Missouri against AmeriDebt in September. Debtworks was formed in 1999 when AmeriDebt spun off its processing function for consumer debt plans and turned it into a for-profit business owned and controlled by Pukke, according to the Senate investigators.

Credit counselors historically have been financed by banks that issue credit cards but those contributions have been declining, forcing counseling agencies to charge fees.

Credit counseling works by putting consumers who cannot afford to make all their payments into debt management programs that allow them to consolidate their debts from several credit cards, reduce their monthly payments and lower their interest rates. Consumers agree to destroy their credit cards, not take out new credit and make a monthly payment to the counseling agency, which distributes it to creditors.

AmeriDebt, based in Germantown, Md., has been sued by the Federal Trade Commission, five states and consumers.

The FTC alleged that the company used deceptive marketing to bilk hundreds of thousands of customers and failed to educate people about how to get out of debt. The regulators also alleged that AmeriDebt made customers believe that an initial fee would be part of their debt-reduction payments to creditors - but it instead went to AmeriDebt.

The company has disputed the regulators’ allegations. It says it offers customers educational services, and that the debt-reduction payments are “voluntary contributions.”



Atheist calls pledge unconstitutional

By ANNE GEARAN
AP WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Not long after the Supreme Court came to order Wednesday with the invocation, “God save the United States and this honor-

able court,” the justices were deep in a wrenching argument over whether millions of public schoolchildren may continue pledging allegiance to one nation “under God.”

The religious reference in the Pledge of Allegiance, a Califor-

Man charged with porn actress’ slaying

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP)—A photographer was charged with fatally stabbing a porn actress, apparently after a photo shoot with a sexual bondage theme, prosecutors said Wednesday.

Anthony Joseph Frederick was charged with murder, abuse of a corpse and possession of a knife and was in custody without bail, prosecutors said. As he was led from a courthouse, Frederick called out to reporters that he was innocent.

District Attorney Bruce Castor said Frederick, 46, was also charged with lying to authorities about the death of 23-year-old actress and model Natel King, also known by the stage name Taylor Summers. King, who was from Canada, had been missing for more than three weeks.

“Obviously, she put up a fight against her attacker,” Castor said at a news conference. “I believe, and investigators believe, that she met her demise at the hands of Anthony Frederick, as part of a sexual bondage fantasy.”

However, Castor said there may have also been a dispute over money. Authorities said it was not clear exactly where and when the killing took place.

Jennifer Mitkus, 29, was charged with lying to authorities and hindering apprehension, and authorities

said she was Frederick’s assistant. She was in jail in lieu of \$100,000.

It was not immediately clear whether Frederick or Mitkus had lawyers and neither defendant could be reached for comment. The two were awaiting initial hearings.

Frederick was arrested around midnight Tuesday, less than a day after King’s body was found in a rocky, heavily wooded area near the Shuylkill River in suburban Philadelphia about 30 feet from a road, Castor said.

King, who has relatives in the Ontario area, died of multiple stab wounds to the chest, neck and hands, Castor said. Her body was wrapped in a backdrop similar to the type used by photographers.

Frederick told investigators he took 20 digital photos of King on Feb. 29. He and Mitkus said King was paid \$900 and they left. King was never heard from again and her car was found parked nearby on March 5.

Photos Frederick provided show King displaying bondage paraphernalia similar to that found with the body. A coroner identified the body Wednesday as King.

In a studio Frederick used, Castor said investigators found “a handwritten poem dealing with cutting and bleeding.”

nia atheist argued, is an unconstitutional government promotion of religion in his daughter’s third-grade classroom.

“I am an atheist. I don’t believe in God,” Michael Newdow told the justices and a rapt, packed courtroom, arguing with passion and personal asides—unusual for the dry, cerebral high court. “Every school morning, my child is asked to stand up, face that flag, put her hand over her heart and say that her father is wrong.”

On the other side, Bush administration lawyer Theodore Olson said the pledge reflects America’s religious heritage.

“It is an acknowledgment of the religious basis of the framers of the Constitution, who believed not only that the right to

revolt, but that the right to vest power in the people to create a government ... came as a result of religious principles,” Olson said.

That view was loudly represented outside the court, with scores of demonstrators reciting the pledge and carrying signs that read, “In God We Trust.”

The high court is expected to rule by summer.

Newdow, a lawyer, made the rare and usually foolhardy decision to argue his own case before the court. He withstood the justices’ vigorous questions, and based on their smiles and glances, it seemed he had won their respect.

Newdow had prevailed in one respect before Wednesday’s argument began. He had asked

Justice Antonin Scalia to step aside because of remarks that seemed to prejudge the case. Scalia complied.

If the rest of the court agrees with Newdow now, it could declare that the phrase “under God” breaches the figurative wall separating church and state. That would mean an end to the Pledge of Allegiance as generations of American schoolchildren have known it.

Or, as several justices indicated during arguments, the court could rule that the words are a benign and ceremonial part of a traditional, patriotic exercise.

“We have so many references to God in our daily lives today,” Justice Sandra Day O’Connor told Newdow, including the court’s own, familiar opening call.

If the pledge cannot refer to God, the justices asked, what about the phrase “In God We Trust” on U.S. currency? What about dating laws and government proclamations with the notation, “in the year of our Lord?”

Newdow’s answer: Nobody is making his 9-year-old say “In God We Trust” or singling her out as an oddball if she refuses.

The Supreme Court already has ruled that schoolchildren cannot be forced to say the pledge, but Newdow says that is not good enough. When a teacher, paid by taxpayers, stands up and leads the pledge, it is unrealistic to expect small children to opt out, Newdow said.

“Imagine you’re the one atheist with 30 Christians,” Newdow said.

Nichols allegedly tied to McVeigh calls

McALESTER, Okla. (AP)—Prosecutors at Terry Nichols’ murder trial Wednesday sought to show that a prepaid calling card found in Nichols’ home was used to reserve the Ryder rental truck used in the Oklahoma City bombing.

FBI agents found the card bearing the name of Daryl Bridges at Nichols’ Herington, Kan., home three days after the blast. The name is one of several aliases prosecutors have tied to Nichols.

John Kane, a former executive at West Coast Telecommunications Co., testified Wednesday that company records indicate that the card was used a few days before the bombing by someone who called Nichols’ home from a bus station in Junction City, Kan. A few min-

utes later, he said, the card was used to call a Ryder truck rental agency in Junction City.

Kane said there was no way of knowing who made the calls or what was said.

But prosecutors allege that Timothy McVeigh used the card to call Nichols and then to reserve the truck that delivered the bomb that destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on April 19, 1995, killing 168 people.

Nichols is on trial on 161 state murder charges that could bring the death penalty. Prosecutors say he worked with McVeigh to assemble the materials for the bomb.

Nichols is already serving a life sentence on federal charges for the deaths of eight federal officers. McVeigh was executed in 2001.

shell



Cherry blossom trees start to bloom in Washington on the National Mall, in this March file photo. The Capitol is in the background.



ACLU, gay couples sue in Oregon

By ANDREW KRAMER
AP WRITER

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—The American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit Wednesday that could put the issue of gay marriage on the fast track to the state’s Supreme Court.

The dispute over same-sex weddings could be heard as early as next month.

Several other legal challenges had been brought by conservative leaders and Christian pastors, but gay-marriage opponents and supporters consolidated their lawsuits because they agree the ACLU’s suit most directly addresses the constitutional issues arising from gay marriage.

The civil rights group filed

the suit in Multnomah County Circuit Court on behalf of gay couples whose marriages were not recognized by the state’s Office of Vital Statistics.

Multnomah County commissioners decided to grant the licenses three weeks ago. The county, which encompasses much of metropolitan Portland, is the only part of the country currently issuing same-sex marriage licenses.

Kevin Neely, spokesman for Attorney General Hardy Myers, said the state will file its response by April 5, and a decision by Multnomah County Circuit Judge Frank Bearden is expected by the end of that month under an expedited process agreed to by gay marriage opponents and supporters. That

would set the stage for an immediate appeal to the Oregon Supreme Court, but it is unclear when the high court would hear or rule on the case.

On Wednesday, the state Supreme Court denied a separate request by two national religious groups to immediately rule on same-sex marriage, leaving the ACLU suit as the one most likely to reach the high court.

Multnomah County has issued more than 2,400 licenses to gay couples since March 3. San Francisco became the first area to allow same-sex marriages Feb. 12, and handed out more than 4,000 licenses before the California Supreme Court ordered the city to stop March 11.

ACROSS THE NATION

Crowd attacks driver after fatal accident

CHICAGO (AP)—An angry crowd pulled a truck driver from his rig and pummeled him after he struck and killed a pedestrian, authorities said.

The attack left truck driver Miguel Chavez in serious condition.

Lavarious West, 22, was charged with aggravated battery, and authorities were interviewing several others, Cook County state’s attorney spokeswoman Marcy Jensen said.

Police spokesman Matthew Jackson said a witness identified West as one of the attackers in the South Side neighborhood and pointed him out in a lineup. West is scheduled to appear at a bond hearing Thursday.

A telephone listing for West could not immediately be found Wednesday night.

Chavez, 39, was cited for striking a pedestrian in the Tuesday night accident.

The pedestrian was identified as Eddie Boyd, 23. Authorities could not say if the attackers and Boyd were acquainted.

Adult shop restrictions reach High Court

WASHINGTON (AP)—Attorneys for an adult bookstore asked the Supreme Court Wednesday to throw out a local zoning law, arguing that a provision of this governmental device for reining in such establishments is unconstitutional.

Attorney Michael Gross, representing the owners of Christal’s, said the licensing requirements for adult businesses in Littleton, Colo., violate previous court rulings that guaranteed a prompt review from a judge.

Several justices expressed skepticism that the threat to the sex shop’s First Amendment rights are so severe that a judge should be forced to leapfrog the case over other important cases.

As an example, Justice Stephen Breyer asked why a sex shop’s license case should be heard before an appeal from an inmate who has been arbitrarily imprisoned. Justice Antonin Scalia took it further, questioning why adult businesses should be moved ahead of anyone seeking a license from the city.

Feds warn paintball gun users of dangers

WASHINGTON (AP)—The government issued sharp warnings on Wednesday to paintball gun users, announcing new safety measures while investigations continue into two deaths caused by canisters flying off the guns.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission said both deaths occurred after brass valves unscrewed from the pressurized carbon dioxide can-

isters on the guns, which turned the canisters into projectiles.

In June 2003, a 15-year-old boy from Washington state died after the canister he was removing struck him in the head, the commission said. In February, a California mother of two was instantly killed by a canister that propelled off a gun someone was disassembling nearby.

Police search for fugitives in Ozarks

ALREAD, Ark. (AP)—Police focused on a relatively small area of heavily wooded mountains Wednesday in their search for two suspects in the shooting of a state trooper who also were wanted for questioning in the disappearance of a couple who lived nearby.

State police put search dogs on the same trail where the animals picked up a scent the day before. Deep in the 50-acre search zone, officers found an all-terrain vehicle belonging to the missing couple.

“It’s turning more to a manhunt than a search,” state police Sgt. Pete Westerman said. Police were also using aircraft to search.

The Alread School District canceled classes for a second day because of the fugitive search.

Convicted felon Mark Holsombach, 49, and William J. Frazier, 28, became the targets of the manhunt after a gunshot fired from their cabin Monday hit a trooper, one of several officers sent to serve warrants on the pair. The trooper was treated for a wound to one arm.

US seeking to deport Irish convict

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The United States is seeking to deport an Irish man convicted of aiding in the killings of two British soldiers in Northern Ireland, but his attorneys say his conviction was politically motivated and he should be allowed to stay.

Sean Kelly, 35, served 8 1/2 years of a life sentence and was freed under the 1998 Good Friday peace accord, which offered paroles to hundreds of paramilitary convicts. He emigrated to the United States in 1999 and was granted permanent residency in 2001.

He was detained Feb. 25 at Los Angeles International Airport when he returned from a trip to Northern Ireland. On Tuesday, an administrative judge set a detention hearing for next month.

Friends in the United States say Kelly is a mistaken target of U.S. anti-terrorism concerns, and they are raising money for his legal fees.

“He’s got himself a home, a wife, a child, you know, he pays his taxes, he’s been a model citizen,” said Brian Kyle, owner of O’Malley’s on Main, where Kelly works as a bartender.



World

Spain royal family weeps at state funeral

By **MAR ROMAN**
AP WRITER

MADRID, Spain (AP)—King Carlos and Queen Sofia went row by row on Wednesday, clasping the hands of the bereaved or kissing them on the cheeks at an emotional state funeral for the 190 people killed in Spain's worst terrorist attack.

The Spanish monarch and his family joined Secretary of State Colin Powell, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Prince Charles, French President Jacques Chirac and more than a dozen other heads of state or government in the 19th-century Almudena Cathedral.

"We have cried, and we have cried together," Cardinal Antonio Rouco Varela, clad in purple vestments, told the congregation of about 1,500.

The March 11 attacks traumatized Spain so deeply the government took the extraordinary step of holding a state funeral for people outside the royal family.

The organist played the Spanish national anthem as the royal family entered the granite Roman Catholic cathedral in Madrid's old quarter. Later, incense wafted through the air as a choir dressed in blue gowns sang mournful hymns.

The royal family sat up front during the Mass, with the Spanish government and other politicians immediately behind, including Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar and his successor, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero. Foreign dignitaries sat on the left side of the aisle.

"Great pain has filled your lives and those of your families since that black day in



Spain's Queen Sofia and King Juan Carlos, left sit during the state funeral at the Almudena Cathedral for the victims of Madrid's terrorist bombings, Madrid Wednesday March 24, 2004. Group on right are, from left; Spain's Prince Felipe and his fiancée Letizia Ortiz, the Dukes of Lugo, Spain's Princess Elena and her husband Jaime de Marichalar and the Dukes of Palma, Princess Cristina and her husband Inaki Urdangarin.

which brutal terrorist violence, planned and executed with unspeakable cruelty, ended the lives of your most beloved," Rouco Varela said.

"From the very first moment—that of the anguished search and the inevitable identification of your loved ones—your pain became the pain of our dear city of Madrid, of Spain, and very quickly, of the whole world."

Before the Mass, a man in the congregation shouted, "Mr. Aznar, I hold you responsible for the death of my son!"

Many Spaniards have accused Aznar of provoking the bombings by supporting the U.S.-led war in Iraq, and his party lost national elections three days after the attacks to Zapatero's Socialists.

Queen Sofia wiped away tears and the king held a handkerchief to his face during Wednesday's service. At one point a middle-aged woman clutching a picture of a young man curtsied before

the queen, kissed her hand and wept.

Another woman in the congregation broke down in sobs, heaving with grief as a male companion put his arm around her.

As the Mass ended, members of the royal family went from row to row in the cathedral, consoling relatives of the dead. The queen struggled to hold back tears. One of her two daughters, Princess Cristina, and husband Inaki Urdangarin, cried uncontrollably as they made the same sad procession.

Neither Aznar nor anyone in his government approached grieving relatives at the funeral.

Spanish national television broadcast the service, along with an on-screen list of the names of the bombing victims.

Crowds of several hundred people gathered on a cold, overcast day before giant-screen TVs broadcasting the funeral outside the cathedral, in a Royal Palace garden and in the Puerta

del Sol—a bustling plaza where one of several makeshift memorials to the victims sprang up after the bombings.

It was the first state funeral for people outside the royal family in the history of Spain's new democracy, restored after

dictator Gen. Francisco Franco died in 1975. The last state funeral was held in 2000 for the king's mother.

Two more Madrid bombings suspects jailed

MADRID, Spain (AP)—A Spanish judge on Wednesday charged two more suspects, including the first woman, in connection with the Madrid commuter train bombings.

The charges bring to 11 the number of those accused in the March 11 attacks that killed at least 190 and wounded about 1,800.

Judge Juan del Olmo charged and ordered jailed Moroccans Rafa Zuher and Naima Oulad Akcha after questioning them separately for more than six

hours. They were arrested over the weekend. They face allegations of collaborating with a terrorist group.

Court officials said both suspects condemned the March 11 railway bombings and denied they had any links to the attacks.

Spanish authorities have arrested 15 suspects in connection with the March 11 railway bombings—11 Moroccans, two Indians, one Algerian and a Spaniard. Thirteen remain in custody, of whom 11 now have been charged and jailed pending further

investigation. One Moroccan and the Algerian were released.

Of the suspects charged so far, five have been charged with mass murder and belonging to a terrorist group and six have been charged with collaborating with a terrorist group.

All but the two Indians are being held in solitary confinement without access to lawyers or family members.

With the exception of the Spaniard, all of those charged have denied any involvement in the attacks.

Spain's Zapatero vows to pull Iraq troops

MADRID, Spain (AP)—Spain's incoming prime minister held firm on a June 30 date for withdrawing Spanish troops from Iraq in talks Wednesday with Secretary of State Colin Powell, who offered an immediate dialogue on the United Nations' role there, a government spokesman said.

Powell, in Madrid for the state funeral of victims of the March 11 train bombings, met briefly with Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, whose Social-

ists defeated the conservative Popular Party in elections three days after the attacks.

At a briefing, Miguel Angel Moratinos, the likely next foreign minister, said Powell asked how the United States could work with Spain in the United Nations to address Zapatero's concerns.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, meeting earlier with Zapatero, raised the question of a new resolution that would give the United Nations a greater role in the occupation of Iraq.

In a news conference in Lisbon later Wednesday, Blair acknowledged differences within the European Union over the Iraq war that toppled Saddam Hussein but called for unity to help rebuild the country.

"Of course there is a disagreement over the issue of Iraq with Mr. Zapatero," Blair said. "That is all known. But I think that everybody accepts that whatever their position is on the war in Iraq, the essential thing now is to help the Iraqi people."

pss

French railroad worker finds explosive

PARIS (AP)—A French railroad worker found an explosive device buried in the bed of a passenger line between France and Switzerland on Wednesday, the Interior Ministry said.

Bomb disposal experts neutralized the device, which was half-buried under a track in the village of Montieramey, on a train line heading from Paris to Basel, Switzerland, about 105 miles southeast of Paris the ministry said in a statement. It was discovered shortly after noon.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

France has been on a higher terror alert since the March 11 train

bombings in Madrid, Spain, that killed 190 people. Those bombings prompted the tightening of security on train lines around the world, including in France, Greece and Poland.

In the United States, Amtrak increased police patrols and intensified electronic surveillance of bridges and tunnels, a spokesman said. Major cities, including New York and Washington, also boosted security on their subway systems.

Suspicion for the Spain attacks has focused on an alleged Morocco-based terrorist cell believed linked to Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida network

and on al-Qaida itself.

Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy said there were “a certain number of elements” that lead officials to believe the two cases may not be the same.

The Interior Ministry said the device did not resemble bombs described in threats by a previously unknown group calling itself AZF. An Interior Ministry official said later it was not immediately clear whether the device was capable of exploding.

The group claimed to have planted nine bombs along the country’s rail network and has threatened to explode them unless it is paid millions of dollars.

Police, terrorism experts and intelligence officials held a crisis meeting at the Interior Ministry.

About 10,000 maintenance workers inspected thousands of miles of track after the government publicized the first set of threats early this month.

The state-run train authority said Wednesday it was undertaking a massive new inspection, starting with tracks carrying passengers and hazardous freight.

The device found at 12:35 p.m. Wednesday was in a clear plastic box measuring about 8 inches by 8 inches, the statement said.

The box contained nitrate fuel and a flat battery linked to seven

detonators and a handmade timing device, the ministry said. The device was being examined at the police laboratory, the statement said.

AZF’s threats, first disclosed earlier this month, appeared in at least three letters sent to the offices of President Jacques Chirac and Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy on Dec. 10, Feb. 13 and Feb. 17.

The letters, demanding \$5.2 million, threatened railway targets.

Information from the group led to the Feb. 21 recovery of a sophisticated explosive device buried in tracks near Limoges in central France.

Tests showed that the Limoges bomb was powerful enough to rupture the track, the government said then. It was made from a mixture of diesel fuel and nitrates and had a sophisticated detonator, judicial officials said.

AZF is not the only previously unknown group issuing threats to France.

Last week, two newspapers received letters addressed to Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin and signed by the “Servants of Allah the Powerful and Wise.” That group also was not previously known to French intelligence officials.

Blair to visit Libya, talk with Gadhafi

MADRID, Spain (AP)—British Prime Minister Tony Blair will hold talks this week in Libya with Moammar Gadhafi, British officials said on Wednesday, marking improved relations as Libya scraps its banned weapons programs.

Blair’s visit is a significant step in reinstating Libya in the world community after its pledge in December to dismantle its nuclear, chemical and biological programs.

“We will be using the visit to continue the process of bringing Libya into the international mainstream, and to make clear

that we will be trying to get Libya’s relationship with the European Union developed in the months ahead,” a senior official accompanying Blair said Wednesday on condition of anonymity.

“It was part of our agreement with Libya that we and the United States would act quickly to bring them back and show them the rewards of cooperation with the international institutions,” the official added.

Seif el-Islam Gadhafi, son of the Libyan leader, had told reporters in Qatar on Monday that Blair would go to Libya,

but British officials had delayed confirming the report.

Britain has a long history of grievances with Gadhafi, who supplied shiploads of weapons to the Irish Republican Army in the 1980s. Britain broke off diplomatic relations with Libya in 1984, after British policewoman Yvonne Fletcher was killed by a shot fired from a window of the Libyan embassy, or “people’s bureau,” in London, and relations hit bottom after Libya was implicated in the bombing of a Pam Am jetliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people, in 1988.

New Haitian Cabinet holds first meeting

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Haiti’s new government held its first Cabinet meeting Wednesday as leaders began tackling the multitude of troubles afflicting the impoverished country, first among them the large number of guns on the streets.

The meeting in the National Palace was held as the last contingent of 450 Canadian soldiers prepared to join patrols in the still-volatile capital.

A top aide to Interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue said a top government priority is

to work with American and French troops to disarm militants.

“Everybody has to be disarmed. Without disarmament, there will be no security,” the aide, Miguel Auguste, told The Associated Press.

Auguste did not elaborate but said officials were considering new training and education programs to help reintegrate impoverished militants into society. A rebel uprising helped push former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide from power Feb. 29.

Rebels, for their part, are pressing for the interim government to reinstate the army. Aristide was ousted by the army in 1991, and he disbanded it after being returned to office by U.S. troops in 1994.

Ministers also were discussing plans for a truth commission, Auguste said, saying those responsible for past atrocities “have to pay.” Human rights groups have criticized the government for not immediately arresting rebel leaders convicted of past killings.

DPW 005

DPW 006

World

Life & Style

In Chappaqua, the Clintons are history

By JIM FITZGERALD
AP WRITER

Horace Greeley, the 19th-century journalist and presidential candidate, is getting a good look at why he's no longer Chappaqua's favorite son.

On the second floor of the museum that was once Greeley's house, under a huge portrait of old Horace himself, the New Castle Historical Society has laid out a modest exhibit called "Bill Clinton: Our Neighbor."

It's a grass-roots chronicle, consisting mostly of residents' snapshots and other ephemera, of the former president and his wife, Hillary, since their 1999 purchase of a house in the Westchester County village.

"I was flattered by the exhibit," said Bill Clinton, who attended the opening reception. "I love living here and am grateful for the appreciation of my neighbors."

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton said Monday that she hadn't yet seen the display but called it "a sweet idea" and "another way of making us feel so welcome and at home."

The exhibit will run through Sept. 15, with a month off in June.

Residents of the well-to-do village have been insatiable picture-takers and autograph-seekers since the Clintons' arrival, and there was much material to choose from, said Al Hutin, president of the historical society.

"We went around to all the places he's been, and we knew that people took pictures every time, and we asked for some of those," said Hutin, who put the display together with his wife, Toni. "And we put the word out that we were looking for suitable material."

Franklin released from hospital

DETROIT (AP)—Aretha Franklin was released from the hospital Wednesday after being treated for an allergic reaction to antibiotics.

Franklin was admitted to Sinai-Grace Hospital Saturday after she coughed up some blood while on her tour bus, which was returning to the Detroit area from Chicago, her doctor, Claud Young, told WDIV-TV.

Young said it appears Franklin had an allergic reaction to penicillin she took while on the road. He said the singer was put on medication that

So in the Greeley House, which was built about 1855 and has gray clapboards, upper and lower porches and a white picket fence, is a picture of President Clinton holding a paper coffee cup outside Starbucks. There's Senator Clinton in the Memorial Day parade. Bill's at the bookstore, Hillary's at the supermarket. There's the whole family, including daughter Chelsea, posing with the Fire Department.

Both Buddy, the pet dog who died in 2002, and Seamus, who replaced him, are represented.

The Clintons are captured with fellow diners at a restaurant, with their neighbors on Old House Lane, with kids in swimsuits at a charity outing.

In one photo, taken outside a dentist's office, the former president is holding a girl of about 2. He's smiling, she's sobbing.

"You're beautiful, even crying," Clinton wrote on the photo.

One surprise: The Clintons, with two of the best-known faces in the world, occasionally wear stick-on name tags that say "Bill" and "Hillary."

"The president is very, very gracious and so is Mrs. Clinton," Hutin said. "They're available to the public. Anybody who wants a picture or an autograph, they accommodate them."

He said the title of the exhibit came from Bill Clinton's typical response to anyone in Chappaqua who calls him "Mr. President."

"Call me Bill, I'm your neighbor," the former president says.

Besides the photos, the exhibit includes a bag of golf clubs lent by Clinton, including a putter inscribed, "From Trini Lopez." A placard says the former president's handicap "remains a national secret."

brought her platelet level back to normal. Young has said Franklin's illness appears to be an isolated event.

Franklin smiled, waved and gave a thumbs-up to fans who gathered at the hospital when she was released.

"Love you back," she told well-wishers before getting into her limousine.

The legendary singer turns 62 on Thursday. Last month, she won a Grammy for best traditional R&B vocal performance for "Wonderful" from her latest CD, "So Damn Happy."



Al Hutin, president of the New Castle Historical Society in Chappaqua, N.Y., looks at newspaper clippings that are part of an exhibit in Chappaqua titled, "Bill Clinton: Our Neighbor," Tuesday, March 23, 2004.

CTSI

Pope’s latest book coming out in May

By VICTOR L. SIMPSON
AP WRITER

ROME (AP)—Italian publishing giant Mondadori announced Wednesday it is negotiating worldwide rights for Pope John Paul II’s new book, a recollection of his years as bishop in Poland.

The book will come out in Italy on his 84th birthday May 18—a decade after the publication of John Paul’s heavily autobiographical “Crossing the Threshold of Hope,” which Mondadori said sold 20 million copies around the world.

“I wouldn’t be so sure that the latest book means an end to the pope’s writing career,” said

John Paul’s spokesman, Joaquin Navarro-Valls, seated beside Mondadori executives at the book launch at a hotel.

Navarro-Valls described the book as “recollections and reflections” centered on a 20-year period from when Karol Wojtyla became a bishop in 1958 through his election as the first Polish pope in 1978. It includes memories of his clashes with Communist authorities in Poland as well as his meetings with people of all walks of life at the archbishop’s palace in Krakow, Navarro-Valls said.

The book was written between March and August 2003. The pope wrote some portions in Polish and dictated others,

all in a “style that can be read by the general public, not only bishops,” Navarro-Valls said.

The 200-page book is titled “Get Up, Let Us Go,” taken from a passage from Mark in the Gospels of Christ speaking to his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane just before his betrayal and crucifixion.

Mondadori officials said they are negotiating rights for the English, French, German and Spanish versions, and it was not immediately clear exactly when they would come out. There will also be a Polish edition.

The publishing house is part of Premier Silvio Berlusconi’s media empire, but Mondadori Vice President Maurizio Costa

said he hadn’t talked to him about the book.

Completion of the work is the latest literary achievement for the pope, who is pushing ahead with a heavy pace despite Parkinson’s disease and knee and hip ailments.

John Paul’s book “Gift and Mystery” was also autobiographical in vein, with parts of it talking about his father and his relations with Jews in his homeland.

John Paul also published poems, plays and essays during his days as a priest, bishop, cardinal of Krakow and later as pope. Earlier this month, the Vatican said there was a “boom” in sales and translations of the first book of poetry he wrote since assum-



AP
Pope John Paul II attends a ceremony where he received the Charlemagne Prize from the city of Aachen, Germany, in the Sala Clementina at the Vatican, Wednesday, March 24, 2004.

ing the papacy in 1978. Called the “Roman Triptych,” the work is a three-part meditation on nature, life and death. It was released in 2003.

Navarro-Valls said the royalties will go into a special fund for charitable use.

Gian Arturo Ferrari, head of Mondadori’s book division, said royalties from “Crossing the Threshold of Hope” were given by the pope for building churches in eastern Europe.

Princess Diana exhibit to come to US

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—A collection of Princess Diana’s evening gowns, family photographs and childhood treasures will be featured in an exhibit that will make its United States debut here in October.

“Diana, a Celebration,” which includes Diana’s wedding gown, diamond tiara and dramatic 25-foot train, will be on display at the city’s Museum of Art Oct. 10-Dec. 31. Presenters said they hoped the collection would provide context to her life as a glamorous humanitarian and offer a window into her connection with the public.

“She could have done the usual royal thing of just turning up and cutting ribbons or whatever but she was never like that,” said Diana’s brother, Earl Spencer, who met with reporters Tuesday. “She wanted to do much more and to give of herself to people.”

Photographs and home movies from their ancestral home of Althorp show Diana as a young-

ster, posing in her ballet shoes or diving into a swimming pool.

Her relationship with Prince Charles is displayed through a 1980 Christmas card from the prince—inscribed “from your tap dancing partner, Charles.”

In a nod to her sense of style, the exhibit offers 28 dresses, suits and gowns designed by Versace, Valentino and Chanel, including the light green protective vest Diana wore over denim during 1997 trips to Angola and Bosnia to fight land mines.

The display offers tributes that followed her fatal Paris car crash in August 1997, including the score and handwritten lyrics from Elton John and Bernie Taupin’s reworking of “Candle in the Wind,” and the original text of the tribute Spencer delivered during Diana’s funeral at Westminster Abbey.

The 150-piece exhibit is on display now in Toronto and attracted as many as 5,000 visitors a day during a 2002 stop in Japan.

MELL
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Keith receives four CMT Video nominations

By JOHN GEROME
AP WRITER

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Toby Keith received a leading four nominations for Country Music Television's Flameworthy Video Music Awards, while Kenny Chesney, Rascal Flatts and Alan Jackson picked up three each.

The fan-voted awards show airs live from Nashville 8-10 p.m. EST April 21. CMT released the list of nominees Wednesday.

Keith is nominated for collaborative video for his duet with Willie Nelson "Beer for My Horses." The video, which unfolds like a TV crime show, is also in the running for video of the year. Director Michael Salomon also was nominated for his work on the video.

Keith's other nominations are for "American Soldier," which is nominated in the male video and video of the year categories.

Chesney is nominated in the hottest video category for "No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems," while his "There Goes My Life" is up for male video and video of the year.

Rascal Flatts' "I Melt" received nods for hottest video, group/duo and video of the year. Shot in Miami's South Beach area, the video caused a stir because it shows a brief glimpse of guitarist Joe Don Rooney's bare



Country music artist Sara Evans smiles as she reads her own nomination for her song "Perfect" in the Female Video of the Year category for Country Music Television's 2004 Flameworthy Video Music Awards during a news conference in Nashville, Tenn., Wednesday, March 24, 2004.

backside and revealing shower and bedroom shots of a female model.

Jackson's duet with Jimmy Buffett "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere," is nominated for collaborative video and video of the year. The singer is also nominated for male video for his poignant "Remember When."

Shania Twain's "Forever and For Always" is up for female video and video of the year. Keith Urban's "Who Wouldn't Wanna Be Me" is nominated for hottest video and "You'll Think of Me" for video of the year.

Country music icon Dolly Parton will host the show, which has a more irreverent style than

other country music events. It's closer in tone to its sister networks MTV and VH1 than to the award shows by Country Music Association or the Academy of Country Music.

Last year's award show drew one of the largest audiences in CMT's history with more than 8.3 million viewers.

Keys to perform at Copenhagen Theater

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP)—Alicia Keys will be the first pop artist ever to give a concert at Copenhagen's 18th century Royal Theater, the playhouse said Wednesday.

The R&B singer, known for the success of her 2001 album "Songs in A Minor," will perform June 16 on the theater's main Old Stage.

"Although rhythmic concerts normally are outside our normal repertoire, we believe that an artist like Alicia Keys has a quality and a caliber that fits perfectly in our classical surroundings," theater manager Michael Christiansen said.

The downtown Copenhagen playhouse dates to 1770. Its repertoire includes classical drama, ballets, operas and concerts by philharmonic and chamber orchestras.

With its red velvet padded walls and seats and golden balconies, the Old Stage from 1874 is the oldest of the theater's four stages. It can seat 1,330 people.



Singer Alicia Keys poses in New York, in this Nov. 26, 2003, file photo.

Victoria Gotti gets reality TV show

NEW YORK (AP)—Mob daughter and author Victoria Gotti, described as a cross between Carmela Soprano and Danielle Steele, will be the subject of a new TV series on the A&E Network.

The cable channel said Wednesday it was beginning production on

"Growing Up Gotti," a new TV series featuring the daughter of the late mob boss John Gotti.

Victoria Gotti and her three sons "will form the unpredictable, sometimes humorous and often startling centerpiece to the series," A&E said.

"We are thrilled to get this unbelievable access to the intimate life of a very public person and that of her family," said Robert Debitetto, A&E's senior vice president of programming.

No air date has been given for the series.

Red-blooded Americans needed to ensure safe blood supply

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: For a grandmother fighting leukemia, a child battling sickle cell anemia, or a parent awaiting a liver transplant, a safe and available blood supply is more than a wish—it's a necessity. Our goal is to ensure that blood is available to patients when they need it.

We encourage our nation's citizens to donate blood. Our call to action comes at a time when blood supplies are perilously low.

Blood has a shelf life of only 42 days. The supply must be constantly replenished. Donors can safely give blood up to six times a year. To avert shortages, please ask your readers to donate.

Blood donation is safe and takes only one hour. To be eligible to donate, you must be at least 17 years of age (some states permit younger teens to donate with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds and be in good health. The single unit of blood you donate could help to save the lives of up to three people.

To learn more about donating blood and to locate a nearby blood collection facility, contact one of the following organizations today: American Association of Blood Banks: (866) 376-6968 or www.aabb.org; American Red Cross: (800) 448-3543 or www.redcross.org; America's Blood Centers: (888) 872-5663 or www.americasblood.org.

KAREN SHOOS LIPTON, CEO,
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF BLOOD BANKS

DEAR KAREN: I'm pleased to pass along your important message. No one can predict when a life-threatening emergency might strike—and a national blood supply is something many of us take for granted. This is something that can affect all of us, so, my friends, let's roll up our sleeves and make sure that our hospitals and emergency centers are well stocked.

DEAR ABBY: While I was still married, I began dating "Alvin," a man I met through work. I then divorced my husband—the marriage wasn't good anyway—and moved in with Alvin. It meant giving up most of my friends and also my lifestyle.

Alvin gets mad if I wear something he thinks is "too tight" or "too revealing." He goes wherever he wants whenever he wants, but he gets upset if I even visit my parents. He is nasty to one of my children, and I feel like I'm constantly defending my child.

To make a long story short, our lease is up in a few weeks, and Alvin's been hinting that he and I will be moving separately.

I have a chance to rent a wonderful apartment, and I am starting to think I should take it no matter what happens with Alvin, but I'm scared to death to be on my own.

Should I cut my losses and move on with my children? I hate to say this, but I think I still love Alvin and the security he provides.

I have no clue what to do, but I do know I am afraid.

NEVER BEEN ON MY OWN

DEAR NEVER: The security he provides? It sounds more like "maximum security" to me. You are living with a man who is controlling, abusive to your child and hinting that he's through with you. You may be afraid, but it's time to move out and move on. It's better for everyone's sake. You'll find emotional support if you look for it. Join Parents Without Partners (800-637-7974 or www.parentswithoutpartners.org) or join the YWCA. Emotional support is available if you make up your mind to reach out for it.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



Carrey used personal experiences for role

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jim Carrey says he couldn't have played the lead role in "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" if he hadn't been through some painful relationships.

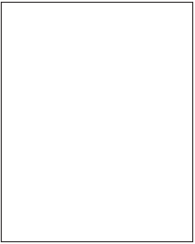
In the movie, Carrey's character tries to have memories of his girlfriend (Kate Winslet) erased after she's had him wiped from her mind.

The 42-year-old actor, twice divorced, says he dug into his own experiences to star in the film.

"I couldn't really have done it if I hadn't been through a lot. One way or the other. Either you're the one erasing or you're the one being erased, so it's not a pleasant feeling," he said.

When asked if there's a relationship he'd erase from his memory, Carrey said, "I would never tell you. Oh, that would entail me opening up the most crucial intimacy of my life and I can't do that."

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